

felt in my mind that 280A, as passed by this Legislature, represented an appropriate level of financing for the alcoholism programs in our state and the mental health programs in our state, given their current level of operation, given the availability of some federal funds that have been withheld for a year and given the ability to expand with all deliberate speed. So it seemed to me that the \$600,000 appropriation from general funds to the alcoholism and to the mental health agencies which I believe represented an increase when coupled with a federal fund allowance in the neighborhood of 16 percent over their current level of appropriation. That seemed to me to be a reasonable exchange for their good work, their help on the alcohol tax increase bill and also for the kinds of offerings that they make to our society and the kind of importance that they have in our society. However, this is now Monday, May 13, 1985. We have but 13 legislative days left and we also have been advised in the interim that it is necessary for us to locate many millions of dollars in budget reductions or in tax increases for us to be able to effect a balanced budget. And that means that we are required to be extraordinarily prudent in expenditure or extraordinarily judicious in increasing tax rates. Now I personally am choosing to be prudent in expenditure and once I make the choice to be very careful in expenditure it means that I have to say to myself that I cannot vote to override the Governor's veto of LB 280A. Now that does that mean that I'm nicking or shortchanging the alcoholism agencies and the mental health agencies? Well, one of the things the Governor made clear in the veto process is the intention of the administration to release to the alcoholism agencies and to the mental health agencies the federal block grant money that heretofore has not been released. It's a million dollars. It's a million dollars in block grant funds. Now it is my understanding, I can't tell you precisely why the money was not released in the past though based on a limited conversation that I had with Ron Jensen when we were negotiating LB 280 and 280A, that the money was not released in the past only because there was some belief at that time that the agencies were not so sufficiently staffed and organized that the money could be prudently expended. Sometimes that happens. Sometimes you just simply cannot push a whole bunch of new money into programs without jeopardizing the stability of the programs if they're not ready to receive them. Now whether that is true or not I don't know. I can't vouch for that. That's all that I